

# Tips for Managing your Outlook Mailbox

02/19/2004

---

## Tips for Managing your Outlook Mailbox

---

For those of us addicted to e-mail and for those who just want to communicate with Mom and Aunt , Microsoft Outlook provides many productivity-boosting features. However, managing the volume of messages we receive each day can be a daunting task.

But here's good news: There are several tips you can use to keep control of your mailbox. For example, you can use shortcut keys to quickly process e-mail messages. You can automatically move e-mail from certain senders out of your Inbox or delete them altogether. You can even preview messages before you open them to help you prioritize. Check out these five tips, which address (excuse the pun) how to do these tasks and more with your e-mail.

### Use keyboard shortcuts

Once you discover keyboard shortcuts, you may find it tough to use your computer without them. Here are three important keyboard shortcuts that you can use to manage e-mail messages in your Outlook Inbox:

Press CTRL+D to delete the current e-mail message.

Press CTRL+R to reply to the current e-mail message.

Press CTRL+F to forward the current e-mail message.

You can also manage junk e-mail in your Outlook Inbox with the following keyboard shortcuts. If the **Junk E-mail** feature hasn't been enabled in Outlook, follow these steps first:

1. On the **Tools** menu, click **Organize**, and then click **Junk E-Mail**.
2. Set options for handling junk mail and/or adult content messages, and then click **Turn on**. You can now use the following shortcuts to manage your junk e-mail:

Press ALT+A, J, J to add the current e-mail message's sender to your Junk Senders List.

Press ALT+A, J, A to add the current e-mail message's sender to your Adult Content Senders List.

After running one of these commands, press CTRL+D to delete the current e-mail message.

### **Automatically manage incoming messages**

You can set up rules to have Outlook help you manage incoming e-mail messages. For example, Outlook can:

Alert you when you receive a message from your supervisor.

Move messages that have the text "Meeting Minutes" in the Subject line to your Meetings folder.

Flag incoming messages that are from a distribution list.

To set up a rule:

1. On the **Tools** menu, click **Rules Wizard**.
2. Click **New**.
3. Click an action in the upper list.
4. Customize the action in the lower list.
5. Click **Next**.
6. Provide any additional information based on the action that you selected.
7. Click **Finish**.

**Note** After step 7, you will see a message: **This rule is a client-only rule, and will process only when Outlook is running.** This isn't an error message; it just indicates that this rule resides on your computer and is only active when Outlook is running. Server-side rules (rules that reside on a server) are active regardless of whether Outlook is currently running or not.

### **Streamline your frequent mailers**

If you frequently send e-mail to the same person, make it easier on yourself. In Outlook, you can create a desktop shortcut that will open a blank, pre-addressed message that's all ready for you to send. Here's how:

1. Right-click in an empty area of your desktop, point to **New**, and then click **Shortcut**.
2. In the **Create Shortcut** dialog box, type **mailto:** and enter the e-mail address of your

recipient, leaving no spaces.

3. Click **Next**, and then choose a name for your shortcut.
4. Click **Finish**, and a new shortcut appears on your desktop.
5. Double-click the icon, and Outlook opens with your recipient's address in the **To** field. Just compose your message and send as normal.

### **Clean up your mailbox**

You can quickly clean up your Outlook mailbox to reduce the amount of distracting mailbox clutter. To use this feature:

1. On the **Tools** menu, click **Mailbox Cleanup**.
2. Select options to find old or large items to move or delete.
3. Do one of the following:
  - Click **AutoArchive** to move old items to **Archive Folders**.
  - Click **Empty** to permanently delete items from your **Deleted Items** folder.

### **Tips**

To see where the archive folders are stored, right-click the **Archive Folders** folder in your Folder List, click **Properties for Archive Folders**, click **Advanced**, and look at the **Filename** box.

To customize archiving behavior, on the **Tools** menu, click **Options**, click the **Other** tab, and click **AutoArchive**.

### **Read e-mail messages without opening them**

You can quickly manage your Outlook e-mail messages by glancing at the message content without taking the time to open the messages. There are two ways:

On the **View** menu, click **AutoPreview** to see the first three lines of each e-mail message in the message list.

On the **View** menu, click **Preview Pane** to see the complete e-mail message below the message list.